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*Geo Bond Esq*

**First Biennial Report**

OF

**THE TRUSTEES AND INSTRUCTOR**

OF THE

**MONITORIAL SCHOOL,**

**BOSTON.**

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**Boston:**

THOMAS B. WAIT AND SON, PRINTERS,  
No. 90, Court-Street.

1826.



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Feb. 28, 1925

## BOSTON MONITORIAL SCHOOL.



### TRUSTEES' REPORT.

THE monitorial school was instituted not only to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, but to render that acquisition a source of pleasure. The time we spend at school forms, on an average, no inconsiderable portion of life; and if school can be made a scene of enjoyment as well as of improvement, another object of no mean importance is attained. That this object is too generally overlooked, appears to be not the fault of the pupils, but of the cold and irksome system usually pursued in the developement of young minds:—a system in itself sufficiently odious, even in the earlier stages of our country's progress, when little was required of scholars beyond an imperfect knowledge of the elementary branches; but now become oppressive and injurious, from the increased field of knowledge, which is presented to the learner, by the discoveries and acquisitions of the last half century.—We find, accordingly, that children who are taught on the old plan, are kept constantly on the stretch to obtain that degree of information which the state of society demands. They are pressed, when in school, and when out of it, with lessons which they do not understand, and of course cannot relish. Learning accordingly becomes a toil; and the spring of

life, which should be gay and active, is clouded by unnecessary hardship, and worn by worse than fruitless cares; and, after all this waste of comfort, the progress of the pupil, in a vast majority of instances, is slow and superficial. It is one of the worst faults of this system that children, particularly boys, are treated more like felons, than like beings who err from immaturity of judgement; and, one leading object of our establishment being to render our pupils happy, as well as intelligent, we abolish all rewards and punishments, which tend to excite bad passions; and we appeal only to reason and the kinder affections. Corporeal punishment we deem fit only for the savage, whose dread of present pain, is generally his strongest motive; or for the slave, whose soul is debased by bondage:—it should be banished from every family; and our experience justifies our assertion, that it is totally unnecessary in school.

The common system throws the burden of teaching the simplest subjects, as well as the most intricate, solely upon the instructor. In a large school, he must possess ubiquity; otherwise a considerable number of his classes must be idle, or worse than idle, most of their time; his attention must be frequently distracted from the class in exercise; and he must use great personal exertions to produce a small effect. The monitorial system, on the other hand, while it gives the school the same portion of time and attention from the instructor, by furnishing him with numerous assistants, enables him to exercise a more close inspection over the whole, and to explain and enforce his lessons, with perspicuity and method. On the plan pursued in other schools, every pupil must have much time unoccupied, and of course prove a hindrance to others. By the monitorial arrangement every moment is so fully and pleasantly employed, that even the mischief of a bad scholar is confined to the little class of four or five about him. All skill, manual and mental, depends on practice, and this the monitorial system gives to the greatest possible extent. It affords to each pupil in a school of one hundred,



more actual practice than he would obtain on the common plan in a school of ten. Hence the superiority of the former. By systematic movements it fills up every moment, and thus avoids that *ennui*, which always attends children, when idle. It gives a succession of studies which prevents satiety and disgust. Its minute classification affords each scholar the chance of advancement; and, if there be superior intellect, it must develop itself in such a seminary, and take its appropriate rank, unannoyed by envy, and unshackled by pride.

The common practice is, to load the memory of pupils with a mass of undigested knowledge; and, provided they can recite a certain number of pages, they are esteemed well taught: but this system is very laborious to the learner, and tends to surcharge and weaken the mind. To avoid these bad effects, the lessons given in the monitorial school are fully explained. The scholars are pushed on no faster than they comprehend their subject; and sensible objects are employed for the purposes of illustration, as on the plan of Pestalozzi. To give correct ideas, these objects are varied according to the age and standing of the pupil, from the Guinea bean, used in teaching the youngest to count, add, and subtract, to the most finished philosophical apparatus, which the elder pupils use in making experiments, and obtaining actual demonstrations in those higher sciences, which even mature minds can but faintly comprehend from verbal description.

More than two years have elapsed since the establishment of this school; and its success has equalled the most sanguine expectations. Much is due to the able and indefatigable labors of Mr. W. B. Fowle the instructor, who has been obliged not only to pursue an untried path, but to do so with little aid from the experience or labors of others. The result of the experiment is a full conviction that the system is perfectly adapted to general use; and the hope is

entertained that it will soon be extensively adopted. To furnish the parents who are interested, with more means of judging on this subject, the annexed report of the instructor, with explanatory notes, is submitted by

J. SAVAGE,  
JONATHAN PHILLIPS,  
FRANCIS J. OLIVER,  
JOHN S. FOSTER, } Trustees.

BOSTON, Jan. 1st., 1826.

## INSTRUCTOR'S REPORT.

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TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE MONITORIAL SCHOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

IN compliance with your request, I shall endeavor to present a detailed account of the mode of instruction which has been pursued in our school. But while I feel the difficulty of doing this satisfactorily, I am encouraged to make the attempt from a conviction that many, even of our proprietors, have very indistinct ideas of the course of instruction pursued, and therefore cannot effectually co-operate with me in the important work of educating their children. It was a general opinion, when this school was established, that every thing was prepared, the system perfected, and the instructor only required to *teach* by the rules prescribed. You are aware that nothing was prepared, that no system was formed, and that the mere act of *teaching* was the least part of the labor required of the instructor. It had only been determined that the school should be conducted on the united plans of Lancaster and Pestalozzi; that is, on the *Monitorial* and *Inductive systems*. But the former had never been applied to the higher branches, in this country; and we knew little or nothing of the other. (Note 1.) I mention this fact, because, in an estimate of our success, it should be considered, that, besides teaching all the branches usually taught in our best private seminaries to about three times their average number of pupils, we have actually been compelled to make books, (2.) prepare lessons in manuscript, and create our system. This will account to some parents for any delay or indecision which they may have noticed in our movements, and for our non-compliance in some res-

pects with their wishes—wishes, however, which were relinquished with a cheerfulness and courtesy for which I am truly grateful.

To make a fair experiment of the new system, it should be tried upon children who have never been instructed upon any other; children, in fact, only three or four years old. But as this could not be, the doors were thrown open to all ages; and the school was composed of pupils from four to eighteen years of age. It was impossible, therefore, to prepare lessons for only one branch first, and then for the next, as the children advanced; for every pupil expected to advance from the point she was supposed to have reached at other schools; and this expectation was in most cases gratified. The united system, then, was to be applied to writing, reading, spelling, grammar, geography, arithmetic, astronomy, French, Latin, and natural philosophy, to say nothing of subsidiary exercises. That this could not be done perfectly must be presumed; and the instructor is not ashamed to confess, that experience has often obliged him to alter or reject what he had temporarily adopted.

I have said that children four years old are received into our school. For the sake of perspicuity and order, I will begin with such a child, and conduct her through all the branches yet taught in the school. Every child in school is furnished with a slate and pencil, which are considered part of the furniture of the school. The first object is to teach the alphabet. An A is made on the child's slate by another competent child, called a monitor. The child is told the name of the letter, and asked to imitate it. Few do so without some persuasion; but after the monitor has held her hand, and made a few letters for her, the child will never need such assistance again. Her first rude attempts are praised, she feels proud of her work, and ambitious to go on. After making perhaps fifty As, she is shown a B, told its name, and encouraged to imitate it. In this way, she will learn to make and name three or four letters in two hours; but, lest she should be tired of this exercise, she is shown a book, and asked to pick out As and Bs, or such letters as she has been writing. In this way, the alphabet is easily taught in one month; whereas, on the old plan, from four to six months are consumed in learning the *names* of the letters, to say nothing of being able to write them. The child then takes the spelling-book, and writes words of two letters; pronouncing them frequently after

her monitor. In this way she soon becomes acquainted with the four pages of her spelling-book, which succeed the alphabet, and which, in the book we use, contain all the combinations of letters, and all the sounds which can properly be called English. After she has written her few words a sufficient time, she is required to pronounce and spell them to her monitor. But this is not her only exercise; for, young as she is, she is capable of doing something in arithmetic. "Fancy" beans are placed before her; and she is taught to count them, then to add, subtract, and divide them. When tired of this, she is taught to make the figures on her slate, as she had done the letters before, and then, perhaps, to draw houses and other objects, by way of reward. The child is never idle, and never wishes to be so.

She is now required to write words from *dictation*. This is one method of studying the spelling lesson, and is performed as follows. Each row of desks, (and there are eight or ten,) is called a class; and each of these classes writes a different word, because each studies a different spelling lesson. Each class has had a spelling lesson previously assigned; and all sit watching a monitor, called the monitor of dictation, who selects a word from the lesson of the eighth, or highest class, and spells it very distinctly. The eighth class immediately commence writing it on their slates. The monitor then proceeds to the seventh class, and gives them a word from their lesson in the same manner, which they write. She then goes to the sixth, fifth, and so down to the first class, giving each a word from their lesson. By this time the eighth class have written their word, perhaps twice, she gives them another, and then does the same to the seventh, and others, as before. While the slates are filling in this way, a class of children, who are good spellers and good writers, are stationed, one or two in each class, to inspect the slates, and correct errors and badly formed letters. When the slates are filled, they are all cleaned at once; and the *dictation* again commences. In this way, the difficult words of the lesson, are all written, and exhibited to the eye; and it is impossible for any child to avoid going over her lesson at least once. The despatch with which words are thus written, may be calculated from the fact that the monitor of dictation never stops, but goes to each class, in constant rotation, until the slates are filled.

After the words have been written in this manner, the children leave their seats at a given signal, and form classes of from four to six, around scholars called *spelling monitors*. These are the best spellers in the school, and are selected as follows. At the end of each fortnight, all the spelling classes are formed in one line, and reviewed by the master. They are required to spell every word in the lessons of the preceding fortnight, and to take precedence as they spell well or ill. After this exercise is ended, the highest in the line are taken for monitors, the ensuing fortnight: the four or six next to them form the highest class; the four next, the next in rank; and so on, to the lowest. When the classes have formed around their spelling monitors, the lesson is spelled in the following manner. The monitor pronounces a word distinctly, the highest in the class pronounces it after her, to show that she knows what it is, and then spells it. If she mistakes, the next points out her error, then spells the whole word and "goes up." Then the child who first missed is obliged to spell the word as corrected, that she may be profited by losing her place. As the number of children in a class is very small, each is obliged to spell a great many words, and must necessarily pay close attention to the words spelled by her classmates.

As soon as the child can write words of four or five letters, she is required to read. The best readers are selected for monitors, by an examination similar to that for spelling monitors; and these reading monitors are taught by the master. The rest of the scholars are divided into small classes of five or six; and, leaving their seats, form a semi-circle around the monitor. The children are allowed to correct the reader, and "go above her" for so doing; and the monitor is required to read often to her class. The small number in a class affords each child an opportunity of practising much; and the habit of correcting each other makes them attentive and, sometimes, critically correct. The monitors are frequently changed, that if any one has communicated an error to her class, her successor may detect it. All the classes are reviewed also by the master; and the best readers are promoted to be monitors, or to rank with higher classes.

Here I would make one remark which is equally applicable to every other exercise. Such is the number of classes, that every child can be accurately classed with her peers, and a fair competition allowed. In schools on the old plan, where the classes are

sometimes very numerous, the lowest are necessarily very inferior to the highest; and children, when brought into competition with others, so greatly their superiors or inferiors, lose all desire to excel, because success is hopeless; but when her competitors are her equals, or nearly so, the child will seldom refuse to exert herself.

The next exercise is arithmetic. I have already said that even the youngest is taught to count and perform simple operations with beans, her fingers, and such aids. Soon a little mental arithmetic is introduced; but, as the excellent little work of Colburn is too difficult for such small children, manuscript questions prepared by the instructor are used. Next, Colburn's First Lessons are studied; and about the same time, written arithmetic is gradually introduced. This, however, is for the present completely subordinate to the intellectual. The monitors of arithmetic recite to the master, and then disperse to their stations to act as monitors. Their classes form around them; and the lesson which had previously been set, is recited. If any explanations are necessary, the monitor who has gone over the ground before, explains; but, if she is at a loss, she applies directly to the master. In this way, the little classes get a great deal of practice, and the monitor reviews her studies. For the sake of variety, they then take slates and cipher. The monitor dictates sums verbally, and the children are taught to write amounts from dictation. They are never allowed to copy sums, and consequently must acquire a knowledge of *numeration*, as useful as it is uncommon. In addition, the highest adds the first column aloud, and tells the rest what to set down and what to carry: the next takes the second column, and does the same. Any one who corrects another goes above her, as in spelling or reading; and, as all must aid in doing the sum, the attention of all is secured. It is so with subtraction, and all the other rules. The highest scholars cipher in Colburn's Sequel, and record their operations in a manuscript.

In English grammar, the class of monitors recites or *practises* with the master. The first object is to teach children the distinction that exists between words; and in aid of the grammar, which is simple and practical, something like the following method is adopted. The beginner is shown a heap of cards, on each of which is written a word. She is required to assort or class the confused heap. She finds it impossible. She is desired to pick out every word that is the *name* of any thing. This she will do with ease and pleasure.

The heap is greatly reduced. She is desired to pick out such as imply *doing* something. She will do this, and so with all the other classes of words. She may then perform the same exercise in a book. She begins to study her grammar, but advances not a step without putting in practice what she learns. It need not be said that before children can parse, they can often speak and write correctly. The constant use of a slate and pencil naturally leads to written communications with each other. Children six years old write very good letters to their playmates; but, as these loose compositions afford no good opportunity for correction, I generally tell the young class a short story, and require them to write it on paper in the best manner they can. These I correct, and return to them with suitable advice. This method relieves them from the intolerable labor of writing, when they have nothing to write about. The compositions of the upper classes are of a different order.

The process of teaching geography is explained quite fully in the text book used by the scholars. This is to children a pleasing study, and those who are but five or six years old may be usefully engaged in it. A child that can imitate a letter, can imitate the outline of a country—roughly and badly, to be sure, at first—but sufficiently well to fix in her mind the prominent features of it. Her lesson requires her to find the important objects of the map she is drawing. She finds them, marks them on her little map, feels acquainted with them, and proud of the acquaintance. She begins to measure distances, to compare sizes, and in fact to draw. The improvement has been astonishing in this branch; and, to some of the children, it is as easy to draw an outline of any country from memory, as to make any letter of the alphabet. Their geography is entirely practical; and the first part, all that has yet been printed, is confined to topography, and this is nearly all of modern geographies that the memory retains. Beginners draw small maps from common school atlases. After they have drawn each several times, they draw maps of various countries on a large scale. There are but four children in the school who do not study geography.

As soon as a child has learned to shape and join letters correctly on the slate, she is required to write on paper. The monitors are under the care of the master; and, after they have written a copy, are dispersed to their various classes. Writers on paper are classed according to their proficiency. The master, besides taking the



oversight of all, has one or two classes under his particular care. Monitors are placed over the rest; and, in most cases, two to each class,—one to make and mend pens, and the other to set copies. The monitors are, during the time of writing, behind their scholars, looking over and instructing them. As it has been objected that monitors sometimes set imperfect copies, it may be well to consider the objection, for a moment. Setting aside the fact that engraved slips are seldom suitable for beginners, being either of an improper size, or lacking simplicity; and passing by the fact that many masters, to say nothing of *mistresses*, who pretend to teach writing, cannot equal our monitors, I will venture to deny the correctness or truth of the objection; and for the following reasons: First, experience shows that children seldom regard a loose slip after the first line; and nothing disgusts them more than to write a second copy from the same slip, as they must do, if only a limited number of engraved slips is provided. Children prefer, in the second place, to write after written copies; and, if the master sets all of them, he cannot inspect the classes while writing. Besides, a monitor with only four or five copies to write, will be more likely to write them well, trying, as they always do, to excel, than the master will, hurried and busy as he must be, and compelled, as he often is, to write with any pen he can find. The question then is, are not monitors, who are, to say the least, better writers than their pupils, and can be constantly watching over them, a full equivalent for a master's copy, without any inspection? Finally, I believe a child will be more likely and more anxious, to exert herself, when there is some hope of equalling her copy, than when she knows this to be impossible. This is not hypothetical, but a principle of our nature, exerted on every other occasion. We have said nothing of the immense utility of this exercise to the monitors, but if what has been adduced is not sufficient to remove the objection, we challenge a comparison of our writers with those taught by any other mode.

These remarks will apply to reading also. A very young monitor, with a sense of her dignity, will be able to point out to her little class as many errors in hearing them read fifty verses, as a master would in hearing only one; for this is nearly the proportion of practice between the two modes. Besides, the monitors read much for the purpose of instructing their classes. The fact is, the whole depends upon the master. If he correctly instructs the monitors,

they will correctly transmit his instructions to their classes. An examination of even the lowest class in our school, will satisfy any one disposed to cavil; and upon this examination we may safely rest the defence of the monitorial system.

Connected with writing on paper, is the *making and mending of pens*. This is done entirely by the children or their monitors. Every class that comes under the master's care, is instructed in penmaking; but they seldom wait for this. Being allowed to help themselves, as soon as they please, the making of pens, which enslaves masters of common schools, and is a mystery to most adult females, is a very simple operation in our school. It is never necessary for me to mend one pen. A child who mends her own pen, does not write so well for it, at first; but she soon recovers, and acquires an independence of others, which those only can appreciate who cannot make a good pen.

The teaching of Latin was early attempted; but the want of suitable books was a serious obstacle. One introductory book had been published in France. This the instructor translated and used in manuscript. Its object was to remove the disgust which usually attends the study of the Latin grammar. The words of an easy reading book, were classed under their appropriate heads of grammar. Thus, all words ending and declined like *penna*, were placed under *penna*, which was declined at length, as a model for the rest. So with all the nouns of the other declensions, verbs, &c. &c. The class were required to decline *penna*, and every day learn a number of the words of that class, declining each, and giving its English meaning. They also wrote every word on the slate, and on paper. In two or three months, the class became familiarly acquainted with the essentials of the grammar, and a vocabulary of about three thousand Latin roots. The next step was to read the book whose vocabulary had been thus previously studied. This was mere amusement for the pupils. But here our French guide failed; and I had not time to prosecute the plan. I could only pursue the ordinary mode, employing monitors, for a second class had already commenced. The first class has read to me the *Historia Sacra*, *Epitome of Grecian History*, *Cesar*, and part of *Virgil*. The second class instead of *Cesar* have just commenced *Jacob's Latin Reader*, a more suitable book; and both classes have turned into Latin from thirty to eighty pages of the *Latin Tutor*. Almost every

translation has been *written* as well as read, and corrected by the master and monitors. This obliged every scholar to go over the whole lesson, and was a good exercise in English composition also.

I need not here discuss the utility of teaching Latin to females. I was requested to do so by the parents, and believing that it would be a key to the language of every science they might study, a great step towards the acquisition of French, and its other daughters of the south of Europe, and an invaluable aid in the right understanding of English, I opposed no objections, except where the children were too young to begin the study, while the best mode of teaching it is still so imperfectly understood. The *useful*, and not the merely critical part of Latin, is all I shall endeavor to teach, being persuaded that the time of females may be better employed, than in acquiring a knowledge of niceties, to which even those who have spent their lives in the pursuit, rarely attain.

In French, the want of suitable books, is sensibly felt. This has prevented the introduction of many improvements. Yielding to circumstances, the scholars were first made acquainted with the leading principles of French pronunciation, by reading in a class after the master. In the mean time they learned enough of the grammar to acquire an idea of the structure of the language, particularly the changes of the variable parts of speech; always comparing them with those of their own language. They then began to translate as well as read. This was done in various ways. Sometimes by my pronouncing a word or sentence, and their pronouncing after me, and giving the English; sometimes by reading in a class, each contributing her stock of information, and only appealing to me in difficult cases; and sometimes by writing translations. They then began to turn English into French, as directed in Wanostrocht's grammar. This was the course pursued with the first French class: they became monitors of the second class, and pursued the same plan; and these have commenced with a third. A fourth will commence in a few weeks. Bearing in mind that those who have studied French, have likewise studied all the other branches taught in the school, in some cases not excepting Latin, some idea of their industry may be formed from the fact that the first class have gone through the grammar several times, have *written* a translation of all Chambaud's Fables and half of La Fontaine's, have written a large part of the exercises in the grammar, have read Numa Pompilius

twice, once as monitors and once to the master, a part of *Gonzalve de Cordoue*, and eight or ten numbers, each about 140 pages octavo, of the *Annales des Voyages* of the celebrated French Geographer *Malte Brun*;—and all this exclusively of what has been read out of school. The progress will be much more rapid and thorough, as the greater number of classes affords more monitorial exercise.

No suitable book on astronomy being found, and it being impossible for one person to do every thing, the instructor only painted on cloth such diagrams as were necessary to illustrate the leading principles of the science, explaining them to the scholars in familiar lectures, and illustrating them in every possible way by orreries and other apparatus. As a review, each scholar was required to copy the diagrams upon paper, and explain them separately to the teacher. A few lessons were given on pleasant evenings, in the open air; but the want of a convenient place for this purpose was severely felt.

From the first establishment of the school, an appropriation has been made for the purchase of apparatus to illustrate the various sciences taught, particularly that of natural philosophy. A complete course of lectures has been given to the highest class; and, in all cases, the pupils have performed experiments with their own hands. Indeed, one has acted as monitor while the rest have partly reviewed the instructor's lessons. From seven hundred to one thousand dollars' worth of the best apparatus has already been purchased, with the surplus income of the school. Until the establishment of our school, no private seminaries presumed to illustrate their little text-books of natural philosophy with proper apparatus. It is a pleasing circumstance that several have already felt the necessity of following our example; but the inferiority of individual means to those of a corporation, and the flourishing state of our income, will still secure to us precedence in this respect. (Note 3.)

A class in mineralogy has just commenced its operations, with ample materials; for, in addition to our already valuable collection, our cabinet has been unexpectedly enriched by a very valuable donation of foreign minerals, from *William M'Clure, Esq.*, late of Paris, a gentleman distinguished for his indefatigable geological researches, and his zeal in the cause of human improvement. The minerals are spread before the class, examined, compared, and analysed. Besides this, each child is furnished with a specimen

of the mineral under consideration, to form the basis of a little cabinet of her own.

I shall omit many exercises subsidiary to those already described, such as reading, spelling, saying the multiplication and other tables *all together*, an exercise which has a powerful influence upon their habits of order and attention, and is a rapid and pleasing method of reviewing many exercises; for, many pupils who are afraid to speak alone, are emboldened by numbers; and it is no more difficult for the master's ear to detect an error in the multitude of voices, than for a musician to discover a discord in a choir. These exercises also have a powerful effect in banishing that monotony and *ennui* which so often reign in schools conducted on the common plan.

After this tedious enumeration of my labors, you will be surprised to hear that not the least important branch remains to be mentioned, I mean *general instruction*. It has been my incessant care on every occasion, and on every subject within the scope of my own knowledge, to inculcate useful information. To enable myself to lose no opportunity of doing this, my intercourse with my pupils has been as familiar as that of a parent. No magisterial dignity has prevented the approach of the most timid child; and a perfect knowledge of all their little peculiarities has been the pleasing consequence. I am aware that such a state of things is supposed to be incompatible with the rigid discipline expected in large schools; but the experience of two years has satisfied me that it is as yet unnecessary to assume the circumstance and terror which have been considered the inseparable attributes of a good pedagogue.

After this particular description of the exercises, lest their variety and number should leave upon the mind an idea of confusion and disorder, some description of the general principles upon which the exercises are conducted, may be necessary. In the first place, then, no pupil is allowed to be idle; and it is the duty of the master so to arrange the lessons, that a class shall be continually under his care; and that class must not contain one of the monitors whose turn it is to be on duty. To enable him to do this, there is a set time for every recitation of every class. Monitors of arithmetic, for instance, recite to the master, and then go to teach arithmetic classes. While they are doing this, the monitors of grammar recite to the master, and are ready to teach classes, by the time the arithme-

tic classes have finished their exercise. While the monitors of grammar are teaching their classes, the monitors of geography are reciting to the master, and are ready to teach their classes, as soon as the classes are dismissed by their grammar monitors. In this way, a constant succession of fresh monitors is provided; and the frequent change of exercises, prevents the children from being fatigued.

There is a different classification in every branch of study; and, in classing the pupils in one branch, no regard is paid to their rank in another. Hence it not unfrequently happens that a monitor of reading teaches her monitor of arithmetic, or a monitor of spelling has in her class her own monitor in geography. In this way, every child has a fair chance to rise, if her genius leads to excellence in any thing. In common schools, a good arithmetician or reader cannot be first in the class, unless she is superior in every other branch studied by her class.

It may be worth our while here to compare the amount of *practice* obtained by each child in our school, with that of schools on the common plan. Let it be premised that the master is, during the whole time, as busily engaged as any master on the other plan can be. Our school consists, say, of eighty pupils, who attend five hours in the day, not including the afternoon school taught by a female. Five hours, supposing the master never to be interrupted in his labors, and the scholars allowed no recess, will, on the old plan, give each the personal attention of the master, just *three* minutes and three quarters. But, if the master be interrupted, all the exercises must stop of course. On the monitorial plan, supposing the classes to consist of six, each child will be actually practising *fifty* minutes; and, if the master is interrupted, the exercises of the school go on, as if nothing had happened. But even this estimate falls far short of the truth; for in some exercises, writing on slate or paper, for instance, every child is engaged *all the time*. To this should be added the extraordinary attention required in such small classes, compared with that of large ones. If, in a school of only eighty pupils, the advantage is so much in our favor, it will be doubled in a school of one hundred and sixty, and so on.

We come now to the subject of *discipline*. It would be unnecessary to say that no corporeal punishment is inflicted in this female

school, could we believe that it is never allowed in others. We need no check upon absence; for the absence itself is a severe punishment to the pupil. We check tardiness by rewarding punctuality; but, if this is not sufficient, we deduct the tardiness from the time allowed for recess; and, as few children love to sit still while their fellows are playing, such cases seldom occur. This is the only penance we inflict. By a voté of the trustees, the sum of twenty-five cents a scholar is appropriated every quarter, for rewards. This forms a fund, say twenty dollars, to be distributed quarterly, amongst the scholars. Now, as the usual method of distributing prizes and medals, while it gratifies one or two pre-eminent scholars, disappoints and disheartens a great many, fully as deserving, and affords no stimulus to the majority of the school, who never expect to gain the prize, we have adopted a more equitable and satisfactory method, which relieves the master or trustees from the painful task of selecting the best scholar, and affords even the least eminent as much reward as she deserves. A nominal currency, called *merits*, is introduced, and a certain number of merits fixed for every exercise; so that each child knows how much she can earn, and how many merits her classmates are entitled to receive. An alphabetical list of names is written, against which as many merits are marked in scores, as she is entitled to. If she can do more than the exercise required, she receives extra merits. These merits are marked, the moment the exercise is finished; but, as it would take too long to call the roll of the whole school at the end of every exercise, each monitor is required to keep a list of the children in her class, say five or six, and, at a given signal, the marks are in a minute recorded upon these lists, from which they are, once a week, transferred to the general list kept by the master. At the end of the quarter, the number of merits each child has acquired is counted, and then the whole number awarded to all the scholars, added up. By this gross amount the prize fund of twenty dollars is divided, and the cash value of each merit is found. By this method every child receives as much as she is entitled to by her industry; and no murmur has ever been heard. Those who have been able to understand this description will see that there is no limitation to the number or value of merits, the latter depending upon the former; and whether there be one thousand or ten

thousand merits distributed in the quarter, each child will receive her proportion of the fund. But, as the share of some will be too inconsiderable to purchase a valuable prize, the amount is credited, if they request it, in a book kept for that purpose, and then added to the amount of the next quarter. Some pupils have never taken up a cent since they first entered the school, preferring to receive their whole sum, when they withdraw.

But there is another class-list, kept for a very different purpose, and called the *demerit list*. Whenever a child offends against the known regulations of the school, one or more demerits, according to the nature of the offence, are marked against her name; and these demerits are deducted from the amount of her merits, at the end of the quarter; but should they outnumber her merits, they are charged to her, in account, and deducted from the next quarter. This is the only punishment, except the loss of recess, ever used in the school, and it has been found sufficient to restrain the most careless or ungovernable. Your instructor is of opinion that no other punishment is necessary in any school. Corporeal punishment is allowed in some monitorial schools; but the founder of the system discountenanced it, as hardening vicious boys, and ruining the temper of good ones. He proposed various modes of mortification and penance; but it is believed that a few dollars, appropriated and distributed as we propose, will be found more simple and efficacious. The only school I ever taught, previous to this, was composed of children mostly of the poorest class in our city, such as cannot now be found in any other public school. One year, I pursued the system of castigation, with no little rigor; but, becoming convinced of its evil tendency, I tried my present system, the second year, with perfect success. The children were more obedient, more attentive, and more happy.

It may seem unnecessary to say a word in answer to objections which have been made to the monitorial system; since its success has refuted them, in the most effectual manner; but I think they may be proved *theoretically*, as well as *practically* groundless, and therefore beg your indulgence for a few moments longer.

It is said that children, comparatively ignorant, are unqualified to teach others. In answer to this, it might be sufficient to assert



that we do not require children to teach any thing of which they are ignorant; but it is said that children are not qualified to teach what they *do* understand; because they are ignorant of other subjects, and but little older than their classes. This principle appears to me to strike at the root of all instruction; and no adult teacher, who must necessarily be ignorant of many things which he does, or does not pretend to teach to an audience *older* perhaps than himself, ought to be countenanced, for a moment. But the wisest and best of us go to church, and to lectures on all subjects, without suspecting that the teacher is only a monitor, who knows a little more than we do of the subject under consideration, but is perhaps our inferior in other respects. The art of teaching consists chiefly in adapting the explanation to the capacity of the learner. That this qualification is possessed by few—very few—adults, is a lamentable fact. Even their familiarity with a subject is sometimes the cause of their failure, in attempting to communicate it to others. Is it not a reasonable supposition, that the explanations of children to children, may be often better suited to their capacities, than the explanations of adults? If it be granted that one child can teach another the alphabet, it follows that, with proportionate increase of knowledge, she can teach syllables, then short words, and so on to the end of all knowledge. It may be said, then, there is danger of a child's being required to teach too much. If the master is so ignorant of her capacity, as to require such an exercise, she will not attempt it. Children are more sensible of their defects, than their elders are, and have less art, and no motive, in concealing them. If, because a child is not thoroughly instructed, the capacity of her monitor must be questioned, what is to be inferred from the fact that pupils of all, even the best teachers, are often in the same condition?—I am almost ashamed to be opposing theory to theory, when I am furnished with what is the best of all arguments—a successful experiment.

But it has been said, grant that they can *teach*, it does not follow that they can *govern*. Children, it is said, lack judgement—so do men. Children are often partial—so are men. Children love to domineer—so do men. Children, then, are little men; and in what does their peculiar inability consist? Men, it is replied, have more judgement, when compared with children, than the latter

have, when compared with each other. We may safely grant all this, and destroy its force, by saying that if they have less judgement in proportion, the drafts upon it are less also. The child's sphere of government is very limited, and always subordinate to the master's. The objection goes upon the presumption that monitors have full power to punish or reward, without being accountable for their conduct. But the reverse is the fact; for, in every case that can possibly be anticipated, their duty and power are clearly defined; and, in all cases, the scholar is allowed to appeal from the monitor's decision, to that of the master, who is always at hand.

It is allowed that self-government, and the government of others, should constitute a prominent feature in every system of education. But shall children be taught that they must be discreet, impartial, and self commanding, and have no opportunity of exercising these qualities? If children lack judgement, they will run no risk of lessening their stock, by exercising the little they do possess. It should be recollected that every monitor is also a scholar; and our system is truly republican. Being sometimes governed, children will be less likely to grow imperious; and sometimes commanding, they will not easily become servile. *Men* were once thought incapable of governing themselves, but experiment has proved that those who made the assertion did not know every thing.

Perhaps the best test of the excellence of a government, is the general morality, order, industry, and happiness of the governed. In the best communities, some irregularities will appear; but these should not weigh against the general regularity. In forming an opinion of our discipline, however, if a death-like silence be the criterion of perfection, we shall certainly be cast. We have no ambition to produce such a state of things, and maintain it at its known cost of happiness, time, and labor. We love the hum of business; and our practical system cannot go on without it. The old system of committing to memory, and obliging the *whole* to be idle and silent, that *one* may work, is an unprofitable system. We aim at full and complete employment; and this we obtain with as little noise as possible. But we go farther, and assert from experience that this noise neither interrupts business, nor can be consi-

dered an evil. It is true, that several classes recite at the same time, (that is, one of each class does,) but the classes are at some distance from each other, and face the centre of a semicircle, where sits their monitor. They can easily be heard by her and by each other, and of course need not speak very loud. They cannot hear distinctly what is said in another class; and, having full employment in their own, would not regard it, if they could hear. This power of attending to business, and abstracting their thoughts from surrounding objects and occupations, is an acquisition, which, in after life, will be invaluable.

It has been urged by some that we appeal too powerfully to the principle of ambition. We encourage fair and honorable competition in every possible manner; for, although it is desirable that children should love virtue for virtue's self, and act from no meaner motive than the love of acting well, still I do not find that our pupils understand these abstract motives, nor do I think they will ever make them their spring of action, until their elders set the example. Emulation is the most powerful excitement to exertion; and we use it, because it is so. Our system of rewards and punishments, has been explained; and it is clear that there is no danger from that. What then could have given rise to such an objection? If the activity and ardor which our children exhibit in all their pursuits, be unaccountable, perhaps I may suggest a more probable cause for them, than the abuse of emulation. I attribute them to the influence of example, the influence which active and industrious spirits exert upon their neighbors. This universal industry has been mistaken for unhallowed ambition; and, when we think of the striking contrast which it exhibits to the lifeless inactivity of most schools, we are not surprised at the mistake.

Another form of an objection already mentioned, (that monitors are incompetent to teach,) is, that the master does not teach *all* the children himself. It is true that he does not teach the smallest children *all* their lessons, but he reviews them often enough to ascertain their improvement, and to correct any errors which may have escaped the monitors. He examines them often enough to see that they are properly training for his hand. They are never out of his presence, and are always encouraged to ask his assistance, when it is needed. In a system so practical, it would be

impossible for the master to attend to all. He therefore creates a sort of ubiquity, by stationing monitors to watch over such work as he cannot inspect himself. The master should bestow most of his attention upon the monitors; but no injustice is done to the lower classes; for they, in turn, will become monitors, and have so much of the master's exclusive care, that all former deficiencies will be amply made up. That there should be no obstacle to this course, the instructor suggested the salutary rule which refuses admission to all children over twelve years of age. Now, as the older scholars withdraw, the younger fill their places, and are not kept back by the entrance of pupils older than themselves, and unwilling to be taught by them, although much their inferiors in knowledge. This rule has excluded about forty applicants for admission; but it has had a highly salutary influence upon the discipline and improvement of the pupils. The earlier children enter our school, the better. They cannot begin too soon to form those habits of industry, and acquire that docility, which our system is admirably calculated to form. So far from considering the instruction of children by other children an evil or defect that should be remedied, I think it desirable; and their time, as well as the master's is, by this arrangement, employed to the best possible advantage. Our plan is adopted in every other avocation of life: why is it objected to in this case only? We require the monitors to teach what is simple, and easily taught, and leave the difficult parts of instruction for the master. The artist requires that the plain and easier part of his work be done by his apprentices, while the finishing is reserved for his own hand. But, in one case it has been asked, shall we not place our child under another master, until she is qualified to be a monitor in your school? I answer that that time will never come; for if children taught at other schools ever become equal to our monitors in the knowledge of *books*, they will be ignorant of the art of *teaching*, and comparatively indocile and insubordinate. (Note 4.) Such a question supposes that no children are employed as monitors, but such as are qualified to enter the classes more particularly under the master's care. This is a mistake; for every child (except the youngest,) is, at times, employed as a monitor. They are thus betimes initiated; and, no sooner does a child know any thing that may be forgotten,

than she is employed as a monitor, that the constant reviewing of what she has studied, may fix it indelibly upon her memory. Teaching and learning, like reading and writing, go hand in hand, from the beginning. We never separate them.

In our estimate of the advantages of this system, I have said nothing of the benefit which monitors derive from it. We shall connect this part of the subject with our remarks upon another objection, namely, that our practical system affords no opportunity for cultivating the memory. If by this is meant that we do not require our pupils to say books by rote, we plead guilty. But however this objection may lie against *our school*, it will not lie against the *monitorial system*; for there is nothing in the system to prevent the introduction of this worse than useless exercise. It requires no ingenious reasoning to prove, that, if children are only required to recite a page or two from memory, *verbatim*, a monitor is as capable of hearing the recitation, as any master can be. But, if the objection imply that the memory of our pupils is not exercised in storing up as many facts as are well understood, it has no foundation in truth. The memory is, no doubt, the storehouse of the other intellectual faculties; but, for the sake of filling it up, shall we throw in all the broken and useless furniture we can find room for? In a class of twenty, just promoted to my care, are several who have repeatedly committed to memory the large geographies used in common schools; but they neither rank at the head of their class, nor appear in any respect superior to such as commenced the study with them, but a few months ago, and never committed a word to memory. The immense difference of labor which this explanatory mode imposes upon the teacher and monitors, must satisfy any one, that personal ease is not our object in introducing it. We endeavor to exhibit every thing to the senses of the pupil. Instead of describing a kite to a boy we should make one before his eyes, and then require him to make one. Instead of describing the road to any place, we should go with the child, and let her see for herself. Which the child will recollect longest, the definition or the object, it is not difficult to determine. Our experience teaches us, that before children have reached the end of a large book which they are committing to memory, they have begun to forget the beginning. What an ad-

mirable method to prevent a master's having nothing to teach his pupils, and to save the expense of books! and what a comfort it must be to the little traveller on this delightful route, to know that when he travels it again, every object will be decked with the charm of novelty, and as fresh as if he had never seen it before! Even with all our care and practice, much is forgotten by the pupils; but we have a powerful check upon this natural tendency to oblivion, by the incessant reviews of former lessons, which monitors are obliged to make, while teaching. If any branch of education must be reviewed, how much more agreeable must be our method, and how much more will it diversify the exercise, and enlarge the thinking powers. Much as the public mind needs information on the subject of education, I think no one will deny that one cannot teach without also learning. But, if any parent doubts this fact, let him take a geography or other elementary book, and attempt to teach his own children. We will rest our defence upon the experiment. I have always found that those who teach most are the most intelligent scholars; and, for this reason, I always employ all, as far as our small number of scholars and classes will permit.

An afternoon school, under the care of a lady, has been opened and continued for two summers. Instruction in drawing and *needle-work* has been given on the monitorial plan. This department will again be opened early in spring; and it is the intention of the instructress to conform more closely than ever to the system of classification and mutual instruction, so favorably commenced. To enable her to do this, the trustees have provided that not only needles and thread, but *cloth* shall be furnished for the children. This is rendered necessary on many accounts. Many children come unprovided with work; and, even when provided, the work is either so unsuitable, or so diversified, that it sets classification at defiance. These have been serious obstacles to the improvement of the pupils; and it is hoped that any unwillingness to lose, for a time, the little labor of the child, will not prevent a cheerful acquiescence in the improvement proposed.

Finally, in regard to the co-operation of the parents I would remark that it has, in almost every instance, shown itself in a ready acquiescence in all that I proposed. More than this negative co-operation I could not reasonably expect; for it was impossible for

the parents to understand my views, without some explanation of them; and my arduous duties have hitherto prevented my visiting them, and personally explaining my wishes and intentions. I have been promising myself a period of repose, when having matured my system, and qualified myself to teach *every thing*, I should have time to cultivate that acquaintance with the parents of my pupils, which alone can enable me to understand their wishes, and secure their active co-operation. But this time has not yet arrived; and I can only hope that the explanations here attempted, will be some approach to the desired end. Parents may now see what is expected of their children, and will have a guide to enable them to inquire into their pursuits. I can readily perceive, by the conduct of the children, when any interest in their progress is felt at home. Most children love study, when presented in an intelligible form; and, when they find their friends interested in what they do, they work with tenfold satisfaction. Without much loss of time, parents may do much by occasionally asking a few questions as to their children's rank in the school and in their classes, their number of merits and demerits; by allowing them to have a slate and pencil at home, and occasionally asking them to write, or cipher, or draw maps upon it. They will not need the parents' assistance, but may sometimes need encouragement, to undertake what is required of them. In drawing maps, for instance, the beginner is, through diffidence, afraid to make the first attempt. The parent must not suppose, on this account, that too much is required of the child; for she is only required to do as well as she can. The rudest scrawl is always expected; but it must be recollected that the picture in the mind is much superior to that exhibited on paper. On the whole, the instructor is anxious to give his pupils a practical and *useful*, and not merely an ornamental education; believing with one whose memory our city fondly cherishes, one\* who well knew how to value the elegant refinements and accomplishments of society, "That it is time some plan of more liberal and extensive female education were devised, to form the mothers of your children's children; an education, which will save many a ripening female mind from that feebleness, to which it might otherwise be

\* Buckminster.

destined, in this age of vanity and books; so that women may be more generally furnished with principles as well as sentiments, with logic as well as taste, with true knowledge as well as with a morbid thirst for entertainment.”

We look forward also to the time when circumstances will warrant the introduction of physical, as well as intellectual education into our school. The practicability of uniting them was satisfactorily proved by a slight experiment, made last season, with very inadequate preparations. Enough was accomplished to show that the sports of the pupils may be made conducive to their health, as well as to their amusement, and that, with suitable apparatus, and proper regulations, their physical powers may be improved, without detriment to their morals, or to that delicacy of character, which should distinguish females.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM B. FOWLE.

BOSTON, Dec. 23, 1825.



## NOTES.

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### NOTE 1.—Page 7.

THE system of *mutual instruction* owes its origin to Lancaster and Bell, two Englishmen, or, as the French say, to Paulet a Frenchman, who is known to have systematically employed his pupils in teaching each other, as long ago as the year 1785. Whether the Englishmen got their hints from him is doubtful; for the attempt died with its author, who would probably never have been mentioned again, had not the wonderful success of the system rendered the honor of its invention an object of national ambition. Dr. Bell informs us that the large number of pupils in his school at Madras, obliged him to employ assistants. These were, at first, adults, well acquainted with the particular branch they were required to teach; but he found it impossible to produce that concert of action, which is indispensable in large schools; and, as an experiment, he dismissed the adults, and employed the older pupils, whose conduct and operations he could completely control. The experiment succeeded to his entire satisfaction. While this was doing in the East Indies, Joseph Lancaster, moved by the gross ignorance of the lower classes in England, proposed a system, in which the saving of expense was the most important consideration. Bell's school, like ours, was composed of children, whose parents were more anxious to procure the *best* than the cheapest system; but Lancaster proposed to educate the poor and destitute; and, as he was himself a poor man, this was to be done at the least possible expense. We cannot enumerate all the modes by which this end was attained, and therefore shall only mention two; viz. the employment of monitors, by whose assistance 400 or 500 children were easily taught by one master, and the use of cards or sheets printed in very large type, instead of books. If a book contained 100 pages, each page was pasted on a board and hung up against the wall; so that a class of ten children could stand around, and read it. As one card was enough for one class, a single book of 100 pages was sufficient for 1000 pupils; the classes exchanging

the cards as fast as they had read them. The same economy was used in every other department of teaching. This is the system which has made such unexampled strides towards becoming universal. The system of Pestalozzi, not less valuable, is more philosophical and very different. Embracing the popular theory of ideas, Pestalozzi wished to illustrate every thing to the senses; and charmed with the philosophy of Bacon,—who reasoned only from facts, and carried illustration by the side of theory, he wished every child to begin with the elements of knowledge, and advance no faster than he understood the facts and propositions presented to his mind. This system, requiring unusual information, labor, and perseverance in the teacher, it may well be supposed could not rapidly spread. But, in the hands of its founder, it obtained the admiration of the learned and philosophical, who flocked to Switzerland in thousands to witness its operations. We look forward with confidence to the time when a better acquaintance with the science of teaching, and a more accurate knowledge of the nature and operations of the youthful mind, will show that this system is fitted for general use; and that Pestalozzi, far from being a visionary enthusiast, was only born a century too soon. We believe that ours was the first attempt to unite,—however imperfectly,—the systems of Lancaster and Pestalozzi. The former we adopted in the full persuasion,—a persuasion founded on the experiments made in Europe,—that it was a more industrious, orderly, and pleasing, as well as a cheaper mode; and the latter, because the prevailing modes not only appeared to us very superficial, but to have begun at the wrong end. The recent establishment of the New-York High-School, on a plan not unlike ours, encourages us to hope that we have not mistaken the right course. We cannot better conclude this note than with a recommendation to our patrons of a little volume on the subject of Monitorial Instruction, lately published by Dr. Griscom, the enlightened Principal of the school just mentioned. Besides an ingenious address from this gentleman at the opening of the New-York High-School, it contains more valuable information in regard to the history of the monitorial system, its success throughout the world, and the opinions of the learned of Europe in regard to it, than can be found in any other book with which we are acquainted. Indeed, it is in consequence of our having seen this book, that our report is chiefly confined to the *details* of our mode of instruction.

NOTE 2.—Page 7.

Besides the various manuscript lessons used in the school, the following books have been published by the instructor.

1. *A Catechism of English Grammar.* The object of this little work is to simplify the grammar of our language, and produce such a practical application of the leading principles as will not only impress them upon the memory, but explain them to the mind. Two years' use of the book has proved, that, although susceptible of greater simplicity, and better arrangement, it is sufficient to render the study pleasing to children. No child in the school has ever been known to use a dictionary, to ascertain the part of speech under which a word ought to be classed.

2. *An Analytical Spelling Book.* This was calculated to lead the child to a correct orthography, by a progress easy and gradual,—an arrangement which presents no intricacy, and a classification, which reduces the irregularities of English orthography, to an inconsiderable number. This classification is very minute. In common spelling books the words are so mixed that the irregularities seem ten times more numerous than they really are. On a training field, when twenty companies, each in different uniform, are scattered and in confusion, it is difficult to form a correct idea of the number of dresses or men; but, when all the companies are ranged in line, one glance of the eye is sufficient to ascertain the number of companies, and a slight examination will enable any child to distinguish the uniforms, and count the soldiers. This book has been adopted in the Primary Schools of Boston.

3. *The First Part of Practical Geography.* This most important part of geography is merely *Topographical*. Although a small book, and calculated for small children, it contains all the matter of the largest school geographies that children can recollect. The book contains directions for its use, and its complete success has authorised the publication of a *second* part, which is in preparation.

4. *A Treatise on Linear Drawing.* The introduction of drawing as a branch of study in the afternoon school, and the great utility of some acquaintance with this subject, in the delineation of maps, induced the instructor to translate a small treatise which had been well received in France. After using it sometime in manuscript, it was at last printed. This book is calculated for general use, and should be in the hands of every child; and it is hoped that ere long it will be introduced into our public schools, where, although nearly all the boys are to become mechanics, no provision has yet been made for their instruction in drawing,—a branch of study almost as necessary to them as reading and writing; if they are ever to become respectable in any mechanical employment.

The above books, although intended for schools of mutual instruction, are not in the least degree unfitted for use in schools

on any other plan. They may be obtained at Cummings, Hilliard & Co's. bookstore in Boston.

NOTE 3.—Page 16.

Amongst the apparatus already purchased, are the following important articles, all of which are of the first quality.

A powerful electrical machine, insulated stool, &c.

A powerful battery, with 30 or 40 instruments for the various electrical experiments.

A galvanic battery, of the newest construction, containing 50 sets of plates, 15 inches square.

Various instruments for galvanic and electro-magnetic experiments.

A large double barrelled airpump, with brass hemispheres, and various other apparatus for pneumatic experiments.

Various optical models of telescopes, microscopes, human eyes, &c. the rays of light being represented by colored silks, &c.

A compound microscope of the most modern and powerful construction.

A solar microscope and apparatus.

A camera obscura—15 inch concave mirror.

Phantasmagoria, of the latest construction, with glass sliders, containing a complete set of astronomical diagrams, and many fancy subjects.

Optical, mechanical, hydrostatic, and mathematical paradoxes, and various other amusing instruments.

Various glass hydrostatic apparatus.

Glass pumps of various constructions.

Hydrostatic bellows. Syphons of various sizes, with jets.

Pullies, wheels, levers, screws, and other mechanical instruments.

Vertical and horizontal orreries, diagrams, celestial charts, and other astronomical apparatus.

Globes, and a very extensive collection of maps, magnets, and articles for magnetic amusements.

Several hundred blocks, elegantly wrought of box-wood, to illustrate Euclid's Geometry.

A very extensive and elegant cabinet of minerals, purchased of Dr. Webster, before his splendid collection was sold to Harvard University. This cabinet has been more than doubled by the contributions of the children, by Mr. John S. Butler of Northampton, and by the gentleman named in the report of the Instructor.

A good foundation is laid for a collection of shells and other subjects of natural history, plates, drawings, and every thing relating to the earth, its productions, and inhabitants.

A library of several hundred volumes, is already collected; and an appropriation made for its gradual increase.

In chemistry several valuable articles are prepared; although no instruction has yet been given in this branch.

While on the subject of apparatus, it may be useful to mention that contributions of minerals, shells, engravings, or any article which can in any way illustrate the studies pursued in the school, will be gratefully received. There is hardly a family in which such articles may not be found, doing little or no good. We think we have done our duty by informing the possessors where they may be really serviceable. In our plan of instruction is embraced every thing which comes under the head of useful knowledge; and, of course, few donations can be foreign to our purpose.

NOTE 4.—Page 24.

Of the 75 scholars present, on the 15th of January 1826, the ages are as follows.

2	from	4	to	5		10	from	11	to	12
3	...	5	to	6		9	...	12	to	13
4	...	6	to	7		3	...	14	to	15
6	...	7	to	8		1	...	15	to	16
10	...	8	to	9		5	...	16	to	17
12	...	9	to	10		1	...	17	to	18
9	...	10	to	11						

Of these, *all* study reading, spelling, arithmetic, and writing.

71 study geography and the drawing of maps.

66 study English grammar.

14 have studied French some time; and 24 have just commenced.

6 study Latin. Many others, who have withdrawn, studied the above languages.

16 were in the class of natural philosophy.

12 were in that of astronomy.

13 study mineralogy.

20 write English composition every day, in the form of translations: 24 others write original compositions, once a week.

20 write orthographical exercises. Gay's little work was reprinted for the use of this school. It will be found an ingenious book, and the exercise useful for those who are well advanced in the spelling book.

64 attended the afternoon school, for needlework; and

40, for drawing.

The by-law passed in July 1824, excluding all applicants over the age of twelve years, has had the most salutary effect. As fast as the older scholars have withdrawn, their places have been filled by younger ones; so that our number has not decreased; and it is a gratifying circumstance,—although we regret the necessity,—that, had all applicants over the limited age been received, we should have had more than our limited number of one hundred pupils.

It is not an unimportant consideration, that, while *experience* is teaching us the necessity of early introducing children to our system, and we are excluding all *over twelve* years of age, the city has established a public school to be conducted on the monitorial plan, into which none *under eleven* are to be admitted. As there are no public schools on this plan for younger children, those who are received into the new high-school will have acquired habits unfavorable to the system; and many difficulties will thus be occasioned. We know that the talents and indefatigable zeal of the instructor, will do much; but we are convinced that the experiment is begun at the wrong end of our public school system. The reform should commence in the *primary*, and be gradually extended to the higher schools. We are glad, however, to see even this attempt at reform; believing as we do, that, although sometimes tardy in adopting improvements, our city never fails to make up for the delay by superior zeal, when once fairly engaged.

## CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF THE MONITORIAL SCHOOL.

A PROSPECTUS of this school was published in the spring of 1823, in which the object of its founders was stated, in as definite a manner as circumstances would permit. This paper was circulated among the friends of improvement; and a meeting of gentlemen, interested in the subject, was held at the Exchange Coffee-House, on the 16th May of the same year. The meeting was opened by an able address from George Ticknor, Esq., explanatory of the object in view, and the general advantages of the system of mutual instruction. The society was then organised, and the following gentlemen were elected;—viz.

JAMES SAVAGE, President.  
JONATHAN PHILLIPS, Vice-President,  
LEWIS TAPPAN, Treasurer,  
JOHN S. FOSTER, Secretary.

The same gentlemen still continue in office; except Mr. Tappan, who, in retiring, gave place, as treasurer, to Francis J. Oliver, Esq.

The society was incorporated in June 1824. Its stock is divided into 100 shares of \$20;—most of which are sold.

The school was opened with eight scholars, under the care of Mr. Wm. B. Fowle, Oct. 14, 1823. The following constitution was adopted at the first meeting after the act of incorporation in July 1824.

### CONSTITUTION.

*Article 1st.* The government of this corporation shall be vested in a president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary, who, together, shall form a board of trustees, competent to manage all the interests of the concern.

*Article 2d.* The officers provided for in the first article, shall be chosen at an annual meeting of the stockholders, and shall continue in office, until successors are constitutionally elected. They shall have power to fill any vacancies that may occur in their

number; and, in case of an equal division of the trustees, the president shall have a casting vote.

*Article 3d.* The treasurer shall receive all moneys of the corporation, and pay them out only with the consent of the trustees duly certified by the secretary, on a warrant from the president. His books shall be kept by regular double entry; so as to show, at all times, the state and value of the property. His accounts shall be reported at the annual meeting, and audited by a committee of the stockholders.

*Article 4th.* The stock of the corporation shall be divided into one hundred shares of twenty dollars; for which certificates shall be given to the subscribers, signed by the treasurer, and countersigned by the president; except in cases where certificates have been already issued, which shall have the same force as if issued after the act of incorporation.

*Article 5th.* Stockholders shall be entitled, for each share by them owned, to one vote at all meetings of the corporation, and to send one pupil to the school established by the trustees.

*Article 6th.* No certificate shall be transferred, until it shall have first been offered to the trustees, at its fair value, as appears by the treasurer's books; and when a transfer is made, a new certificate shall be issued to the new proprietor.

*Article 7th.* No pupil, over the age of ten years, shall be admitted into the school after the first of August 1824, unless in right of a stock-holder, nor over the age of twelve years, in any right.

*Article 8th.* A meeting of the corporation shall be holden on the first Tuesday of July, annually; and special meetings shall be called, at the written request of ten proprietors. These meetings may review and repeal the regulations of the trustees; and absent stock-holders may authorise other stock-holders to vote for them.

*Article 9th.* All the by-laws, rules, and regulations, heretofore passed by the Monitorial-School Society, or their trustees, not contravened by those passed at this meeting, shall continue in full force, until duly repealed.

#### RULES.

1st. From the 1st of October to the 1st of April, the school shall commence at 9 o'clock in the morning, and close at two in the afternoon; and, from the 1st of April to the 1st of October, it shall commence at 8 o'clock in the morning, and close at one in the afternoon.

2d. It shall be the duty of every scholar to come punctually at the appointed hour; and, in case of absence, to bring a written excuse from her parent or guardian, stating the cause of detention.



3d. The instructor shall keep a record of the names of pupils, with such other circumstances in regard to their conduct and studies, as will best exhibit their character to their parents, and to the trustees.

4th. The vacations shall be as follows:—General election week in May, Fast day, Good Friday, first Monday in June, 4th of July, Harvard College commencement week, and the two preceding weeks, Thanksgiving and the two succeeding days, and Christmas-day; and the instructor shall not be excused from teaching on any other day, except by special permission of a majority of the trustees.

5th. Any injury done to the furniture, school room, or property of the proprietors, by any pupil, shall be charged to the account of her parent or guardian.

6th. Pupils whose misconduct may render their example injurious to the others, may be suspended by any two of the trustees, or dismissed by a majority of them.

#### TERMS.

The terms of tuition, to proprietors or stockholders, are

For children under 7 years of age,	\$ 6	} Per quarter.
.... over 7 and under 9	8	
.... .. 9 .....	10	
.... .. 11	12	

To non-proprietors an addition of one quarter is made; and the terms to them are,

For children under 7	\$ 7,50	} Per quarter.
from 7 to 9	10,	
from 9 to 11	12,50	
over 11	15,	

The trustees have erected a convenient building, 80 feet by 30 feet, in Washington Court. The centre of the building forms a school-room: the east end, a dressing-room: the west end, two rooms for library and apparatus. The south windows opened upon a waste garden under the control of a gentleman who thought proper to board them up. Luthern windows are since opened in the roof, which give better light and air; and the fact is mentioned only to obviate an impression that the pupils would suffer from the measures taken by our neighbor on the south.

In fixing the rate of tuition, the trustees not only intended to cover the necessary expenses, but to provide a fund for the purchase of such furniture, apparatus, &c. as might be needed. The



fund raised by the sale of shares, has been expended in the erection of the building and appurtenances. The surplus income of the school has been expended in furnishing 100 very neat and convenient desks, of which each scholar has one entirely under her control, and the purchase of books, apparatus, &c. of some of which a list has already been given. As the building, furniture, and apparatus, belong to the proprietors, it must be evident that the terms of tuition are extremely low; a large part of the money paid for tuition being merely an investment in stock under their own control. The building is in a retired but central situation, and the comforts and conveniences of the school-room are not equalled by those of any room that has fallen under our observation.

A fund is appropriated for the purchase of books and stationary for the use of the scholars. These articles are in the hands of suitable monitors, who deliver them to such children as need them, and charge the wholesale price for them. At the end of each quarter these monitors make a return to the treasurer of the amount delivered each child, which amount is included in the quarter bills. It is perfectly optional, however, with the parents to purchase of the trustees, or furnish their children in any other way. Two monitors have the care of the library, and deliver books to the pupils, once a week. No additional charge is made for the use of the library, apparatus, and fuel, or for instruction in the afternoon school, which was not in operation when the terms were fixed.

It may not be amiss to state in this connection, that, although the shares are nearly all sold, there are several proprietors who have no children to improve their shares, and there are a few proprietors, whose children, having grown up, cease to attend school. This leaves room for several non-proprietors' children; and, as the shares are transferable, it is probable that several may be purchased of their present proprietors. Any information on this subject will be given by the treasurer or the instructor.



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